

National Incident Radio Support Cache

NIRSC possesses the largest amount of portable low-power communication equipment in one location in the entire nation. Staffed by Forest Service, Bureau of Indian Affairs and Bureau of Land Management employees, NIRSC provides communication equipment for a variety of incidents, from wildland fire to natural disasters to community events.



The National Incident Radio Support Cache, or NIRSC, handles 1,200 "kits" of communication equipment. These kits range from basic public address systems to sophisticated satellite telephone systems. Each kit contains everything necessary to operate the system including batteries, antennas, and tools.

Each kit has a different purpose: some kits contain hand-held radios to provide support for a small wildland fire; others hold different kinds of repeaters to support small or large complex incidents.

Although the main purpose of NIRSC is to provide support to wildland fire incidents, the cache often provides communication equipment to other federal, state, county, and local agencies during major events such as the Mount St. Helens volcano eruption, the Three Mile Island nuclear disaster, the Valdez oil spill, the North Ridge earthquake, the Teton Dam failure, several hurricanes including Hugo and Andrew, as well as the 9/11 incident. The equipment is also requested for events involving large public gatherings such as the Presidential Inauguration and the 2002 Salt Lake City Winter Olympics.

NIRSC can provide communication support to 53 major incidents at the same time.



The radio section repairs and maintains more than 8,000 hand-held radios. Following each use, the radios must be cleaned, programmed, and diagnostically tested and voice-checked before it can be used again. In 2002, an extremely busy fire season, each radio was checked out seven times, resulting in more than 56,000 radios tested and/or repaired.

The value of the 1,200 communication kits and associated test equipment exceeds \$24 million.

NIRSC also provides annual support to law enforcement and the Presidents Federal Response Plan.

